

# Procedures Manual



*Helping Students Pay for College*

## Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

Office of Scholarships and Grants  
Student Financial Services Bureau  
Michigan Department of Treasury

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## **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

## **BYRD**

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**Program Title**

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

**Enabling Legislation**

Title IV, Part A, Subpart 6 of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, CFDA 84.185

**Administrative Rules**

Regulation 34 CFR 654

**Purpose**

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship (Byrd), which is federally funded and state-administered, is designed to recognize exceptionally able high school seniors who show promise of continued excellence in postsecondary education. The U.S. Department of Education awards the funds as formula grants to the state education agencies, which make scholarship awards to eligible applicants. Students receive scholarships for college expenses.

**Funding Source**

State general funds as appropriated annually in the Higher Education Appropriations Act. These funds are then drawn down from the U.S. Department of Education as expenditures are incurred.

**Administrative Office**

Office of Scholarships and Grants  
Student Financial Services Bureau  
P.O. Box 30462  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Toll-free number: 1-888-4-GRANTS (1-888-447-2687)  
[www.michigan.gov/osg](http://www.michigan.gov/osg)

**Contacts:**

Anne Wohlfert, Director  
Carla Foltyn, Deputy Director  
Bobbie Bates, Program Coordinator  
Sue Nelson, Executive Secretary

**Institutional Eligibility**

A Byrd Scholar must attend an eligible postsecondary education institution that participates in federal financial aid programs. An eligible institution of higher education means any public or private nonprofit institution of higher education, proprietary institution of higher education, or postsecondary vocational institution, as defined in section 481 of the HEA. The institution must be located in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and the Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Republic of Palau).

A Byrd scholar may not use the scholarship to attend a foreign school unless the program is through a home institution in the U.S. and the student will be receiving credit towards his or her undergraduate degree by participating in the study-abroad program.

## **B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

## **BYRD**

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### **Department Responsibilities**

Receive Grant Award Notification from the U.S. Department of Education.

Oversee nominations process, working with Michigan high schools and select scholarship recipients based on the appropriation level and number of renewal students in the program.

Process applications and renewal applications from students to determine what educational institution they will attend.

Send enrollment verification rosters (EVR) to the colleges for each semester or term to determine if the student is enrolled full time and maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP) as defined by the educational institution.

Make payments to the educational institutions three times per year. One payment for fall semester, one for spring semester and one remaining payment for institutions that are on terms.

### **College Responsibilities**

Receive and accurately complete the EVR from the Office of Scholarships and Grants and return it in a timely manner.

Notify the Office of Scholarships and Grants of any changes in a student's enrollment status and academic eligibility.

Receive payments from the Office of Scholarships and Grants and appropriately credit student accounts.

Return any funds to the Office of Scholarships and Grants for students that do not remain in full-time status.

### **College Records Retention**

All program records including records of student enrollment verification, award adjustments and refund calculations must be held in the financial aid office files and made available for audit purposes upon request.

Maintain program records for a minimum of three (3) years from the date the college submits its fiscal year-end report.

## **B. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION (continued)**

**BYRD**

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### **Distribution Formula**

Each spring, high school principals nominate one outstanding graduating senior, based upon high school academic achievement and the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) score. The principal will use a mathematical formula to combine the grade point average and the MME score. If more than one student has the exact same calculated score total, the principal may nominate each of the students with a tied score. The top ten (10) recipients from each of Michigan's fifteen (15) congressional districts are selected for the scholarship. In cases where there are ties within a district, all ties are considered eligible.

The maximum award amount is \$1,500 per academic year. If in any year there are not sufficient funds to award all eligible students, the award amount would be reduced according to available and approved funding.

### **Allocation Adjustments**

Any changes in the appropriation amount available to the states will be made by the U.S. Department of Education based on the availability of funds.

### **Payments**

Payments will be sent to the institution following verification of enrollment.

Payments are authorized by and all warrants are issued from the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Fall Semester/Term (after 10/01)	= 50%	or	34%
Winter or Spring Semester/Term (March)	= 50%	or	33%
Third payment for term schools (June)	=		33%

## **C. PAYMENT PROCESS**

## **BYRD**

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### **Disbursement Procedures**

Payment should be credited to the student's account unless the student has already satisfied financial obligations to the college; in such cases, all or part of the award may be refunded directly to the student.

## D. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

## BYRD

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### Student eligibility

A student must meet current guidelines for eligibility specified in current federal regulations.

### Enrollment

To be eligible, a student must be a graduate from a public or private secondary school or receive the recognized equivalent of a high school diploma as recognized by the state of Michigan. Home-schooled students and those at military schools are not eligible for the Byrd scholarship.

The student must have applied or been accepted for enrollment as a full-time student at an institution of higher education.

In addition, the student must meet the following requirements:

- is registered with the selective service if so required in accordance with the Student Assistance General Provisions regulations (34 CFR 668).
- is planning to pursue a course of study in an institution of higher education.

A student is able to receive a prorated amount of the award if they are attending  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. The student must notify the Office of Scholarships and Grants in writing and request consideration for a partial award.

### Financial Need

The student is selected to receive this award regardless of the scholars' educational expenses or financial need, except that the total amount of financial aid awarded to a scholar for a year of study may not exceed the cost of attendance.

### Citizenship

Is a U.S. citizen or national, or provides evidence from the U.S. immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that he or she is a permanent resident of the U.S.

Permanent resident status is documented by the recipient's INS I-151 or I-551 card.

### Loan Default

An award is prohibited to any student who has defaulted on any Federal Title IV/V loan unless he/she has made satisfactory arrangements to repay the loan.



## **D. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY (continued)**

## **BYRD**

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### **Loan Default (continued)**

For program eligibility, satisfactory loan repayment requirements are the same as those set forth under federal student financial aid program policies.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

An eligible student must be in compliance with the college's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standard. The college must use an SAP standard consistent with the criteria of academic progress needed to maintain eligibility for the federal student aid programs.

### **Residency**

Michigan residency is required to be nominated for this scholarship.

### **Postponement of First Year (Not to exceed 12 months) (Student must submit a written appeal. See Section F: Appeals)**

Acceptable reasons that must be documented:

- Educational experience such as co-op or studying/teaching abroad
- Missionary work
- Medical problems
- Caring for ill family members

### **Interruption to scholarship (Not to exceed 12 months except in extreme cases, i.e. severe but curable illness (lyme disease, auto accident) (Student must submit a written appeal. See Section F: Appeals)**

Acceptable reasons that must be documented:

- Educational experience such as co-op or studying/teaching abroad
- Missionary work
- Medical problems
- Caring for ill family members
- Full-time employment to meet educational expenses

### **Part-time Enrollment (Payment must be prorated and is not permitted during the first year) (Student must submit a written appeal. See Section F: Appeals)**

Acceptable reasons that must be documented:

- Educational experience such as co-op or studying/teaching abroad
- Final semester will less than full-time enrollment needed to graduate
- Medical problems
- Caring for ill family members
- Full-time employment to meet educational expenses

## **D. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY (continued)**

## **BYRD**

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**Suspension of Scholarship  
(Occurs when student does not  
meet requirements for renewal -  
not to exceed 12 months except  
in extreme cases or eligibility is  
terminated.)**

Fails to enroll full time without OSG approval  
Fails to meet SAP standards  
Defaults on a student loan  
Fails to meet Selective Service obligations

## **E. REFUNDS**

## **BYRD**

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### **Refunds**

Refunds to the program account shall be made for any student who does not remain enrolled at full-time status or does not meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Make checks payment to “State of Michigan.”

**Appeal Procedure**

Students, who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the scholarship, will have their award cancelled. OSG will send a cancellation letter to the student, and the student will have three weeks from the date of the cancellation letter to submit a written appeal. If the recipient fails to meet this three-week deadline, the recipient's eligibility for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship will be terminated. Students can appeal for a postponement of enrollment, an interruption of enrollment or a reduced enrollment (from full to half time).

- I. To request a postponement or interruption of enrollment or to request a reduced scholarship based on part-time enrollment, the recipient must:
  - A. Submit a written appeal prior to the period of enrollment or within three weeks of a cancellation letter to:

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship  
Office of Scholarships and Grants  
PO Box 30462  
Lansing, MI 48909
  - B. State the reason that the recipient believes he/she is eligible for a postponement, or an interruption of enrollment or part-time enrollment.
  - C. Include documentation to support the reason:
    - Medical problems – signed statement from physician
    - Missionary work – signed statement or contract from authorizing body
    - Co-op – transcript or signed statement from head of department or dean
    - Educational experiences – contract from authorizing body
    - Employment – signed statement from employer on letterhead that recipient is employed full time and recipient's starting date
- II. The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship program will review the recipient's appeal and will notify the recipient in writing of the decision within fifteen (15) business days of the receipt of the written appeal and will:

Accept the appeal and state the conditions of the postponement, interruption, part-time enrollment.

OR

State the reason for denying the appeal.